J I M L E E

WILDC.A.T.S

COVERT-AC -TEAMS

TM

DC

3
JAN

J'MLEE
LUFELD

For those of you who skim comics or skip ahead to the end, you'll realize that this mini-series does *not* conclude with this issue. Initially intended to be a three issue mini-series, I made the decision two months ago to take it to a fourth and final issue (at least for the mini-series). Why, you ask? Well, originally, the third part of the mini-series was to be a polybagged, double-sized jumbo issue, containing a promotional Topps trading card. Since a double-sized issue meant a double-sized wait, and considering that Image's main problem seemed to be that of timeliness, I decided it would be better to get a shorter installment out there sooner than later.

Another reason for the 4th issue was that the Topp's promotional cards weren't finished because of delays in producing all the new artwork for the set (the ones that are finished are beautiful by the way) so you'll find those limited edition promo cards in issue #4. That same issue will also include a sneak peak at x-X-Factor artist Larry Stroman's latest creation—THE TRIBE—just one of the cool Image titles coming your way in '93.

On a different note, I'd like to thank all the people out there who've sent submissions. We've been literally buried with all sorts of talented work; we've shifted through all the creative, fun submissions and will print a few of the best next issue as well. 'Til then, have a happy holiday and a great New Year's.

Best,
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HIS NAME IS MAUL.

BORN WITH THE ABILITY TO INCREASE HIS SIZE AND MASS AT WILL, HE IS THE STRONG MAN FOR A BAND OF COVERT OPERATIVES CODE-NAMED WILDC.A.T.S.

MOMENTS AGO, HE AND TWO OF HIS FELLOW WILDC.A.T.S, VOODOO AND SPARTAN, WERE INFILTRATING THE SUB-BASEMENT OF A TOP-SECRET S.D.I. RESEARCH INSTALLATION IN PURSUIT OF AN ALIEN DAEMONITE, WHO JUST HAPPENS TO "POSSESS" THE BODY OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, DAN QUAYLE.

IT WAS ALL GOING SMOOTHLY FOR THE WILDC.A.T.S.

AT LEAST UNTIL THE ALARM SOUNDED...

a!aROOga!aROOga!

DAMN! THEY FOUND US!

LOOKS LIKE IT'S TIME FOR...

...THE BIG BEAT DOWN!

SPARTAN! ISN'T THAT YOUNGBLOOD?!

THE DAEMONITE MUST'VE BROUGHT THEM ALONG AS EXTRA SECURITY!

THE CODA ASSASSIN AND PIKE ARE ONE THING, BUT WE'RE JUST NOT READY FOR THIS KIND OF ACTION. WE HAVE TO TRY AND EXPLAIN WHAT'S GOING ON...

YOU'RE ALL UNDER ARREST! RELEASE THE VICE-PRESIDENT! NOW!

HATE TO RAIN ON YOUR PARADE, SPARTAN. BUT I DON'T THINK THESE GUYS ARE IN ANY MOOD TO LISTEN.

YOU... ;KAFF KAFF; ...CHOKING ME...!

SHADDUP, POTATO-HEAD!

THEY ARE THE YOUNGBLOOD. AMERICA'S SUPERHEROES. AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS.

RIGHT UP THERE WITH MOM, APPLE PIE, AND THE DALLAS COWBOYS. AND ALTHOUGH THEY DON'T HAVE THEIR OWN CHEERLEADERS —YET— THEY DO HAVE THE BEST PUBLICISTS IN THE BUSINESS.

NONE OF WHICH DETRACTS FROM THE FACT THAT THEY ARE ALSO SOME OF THE MOST POWERFUL BEINGS ON THIS PLANET.

YOU WIN THE FANCLUB PRIZE, HONEY.

WHY DON'T YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS SURRENDER QUIETLY SO WE DON'T HAVE TO DO ANY PERMANENT DAMAGE?

YOU KNOW, COMBAT... THE BIG PURPLE GUY JUST MAY BE AS DENSE AS HE LOOKS.

AYE, VOGUE. BUT AS YOU EARTHLINGS SAY, "THE BIGGER THEY ARE"...

THE HARDER YOU FALL, JERK!

LOOKS LIKE IT'S GONNA BE THE HARD WAY--HEY! IS IT JUST ME OR DID THIS GUY JUST GET AS BIG AS A HOUSE?!

WHUMP!

TAKE 'EM DOWN, PEOPLE! BUT I WANT THEM ALIVE!

BETTER MAKE UP YOUR MIND, SHAFT. IT'S GONNA TAKE MORE THAN A BAD ATTITUDE TO PUT THE BIG ONE DOWN.

JUST DO THE JOB, CHAPEL!

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

LILINNGH!

MAUL! STOP IT! THERE'S GOT TO BE ANOTHER WAY OUT OF THIS!

HADRIAN! THE MOLE! HE'S GETTING AWAY!

HE'S THE LEAST OF OUR PROBLEMS! MAUL'S LOSING CONTROL!

:KAFF!: :COUGH!: KILL THEM! KILL THEM ALL!

ONE LUCKY PUNCH AND YOU THINK YOU'RE READY FOR THE BLOOD, *eh?*

WELL, LET'S JUST SEE WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF, BIG FELLA! READY, BEDROCK?

BAWHAM!..

WHUUNGH!

TIME TA ROCK AND ROLL, DIEHARD!

OH YEAH! MUSIC TA MY EARS!

STOP! ALL OF YOU! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! THIS ISN'T THE VICE-PRESIDENT. HE'S AN ALIEN...

HELP ME! HE'S GOING TO--

--HELL WITH A CHEST FULL OF 50MM EXPLOSIVE SHELLS.

YES! THAT'S IT! KILL HIM!

THE SHELLS BURST THROUGH SPARTAN'S ARMORED SYNTHETIC SKIN AND RIP APART HIS CYBER-ORGANIC SYSTEMS. BUT FOR BETTER OR WORSE, HIS "SEAL AND HEAL" PROGRAM BEGINS REPAIRING AND REROUTING VITAL POWER AND SENSOR SYSTEMS.

AND DESPITE THE FACT THAT HE IS SEVERELY DISABLED AND IN TRAUMATIC CYBER-SYNAPTIC PAIN, SPARTAN NEVER LOSES CONSCIOUSNESS.

EVEN AS HIS ATTACKER MOVES IN TO FINISH THE JOB.

I'M NO REPUBLICAN BUT HE'S STILL THE NO. 2 MAN, AND TO GET TO HIM--

--YOU GOTTA GO THROUGH ME!

DAMMIT, CHAPEL! I TOLD YOU I WANTED THEM ALIVE.

AS THE LEADER OF YOUNGBLOOD, SHAFT HAS THE UNENVIABLE TASK OF MELDING SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL INDIVIDUALS INTO AN EFFECTIVE FIGHTING TEAM.

THERE ARE TIMES WHEN HE CAN LEAD THEM WITH WORDS, BUT AT MOMENTS LIKE THIS, HE DOES IT WITH ACTION.

VOODOO! YOU... YOU'VE GOT... TO STOP HIM! BEFORE ...IT'S ... TOO...;

SPARTAN! AAAGH! CA... CAN'T... THINK... STRAIGHT...

YES! YES, MY MISGUIDED EARTHLING PAWNS!

DESTROY THEM! DESTROY THEM ALL!

WHERE ARE YOU GOING, PIKE? OUR ORDERS WERE TO PROTECT B'LIAL!

THAT LUNATIC'S DOING JUST FINE WITH HIS FLUNKIES. WE'VE GOT TO FIND HELSPONT!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

IN CASE YOU DIDN'T NOTICE, CODA, THOSE WEREN'T THE GRIFTER OR ZEALOT BACK THERE! THAT LITTLE EXERCISE MUST BE A DIVERSION. WHICH MEANS...

"...THEY MUST BE SOMEWHERE ELSE IN THE COMPLEX."

HEY, BOSS, WHY ARE WE SNEAKING AROUND LIKE THIS? WE'VE TAKEN THESE CHUMPS OUT BEFORE. IT WAS A CAKE-WALK.

WARBLADE, YOUR LUCK WILL ONLY TAKE YOU SO FAR BEFORE...

LUCK?! NO WAY, LADY! THAT PUNCH OF YOURS BACK AT THE SAFE-HOUSE, *THAT* WAS LUCK!

KEEP IT UP, KID, AND SHE'LL GIVE YOU A SPANKING...

SHUT UP, ALL OF YOU! CAN'T EVEN HEAR MYSELF THINK WITH ALL YOUR STUPID CHATTER.

WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO THE CORE. THE SCANNER'S DONE ITS JOB. THIS VENTI-LATION DUCT HERE LEADS RIGHT TO THE...

"...CONTROL CENTER."

WHY SO GLUM, M'KOI? EVERYTHING IS GOING JUST AS WE PLANNED. SOON PROJECT REUNIFICATION WILL BE ACTIVE, AND BY THIS TIME TOMORROW, THIS WRETCHED PLANET SHALL BE OURS.

SPARE ME YOUR GRANDIOSE DREAMS OF POWER, HELSPONT. I SHALL NOT BE HAPPY UNTIL I AM ONCE MORE BACK ON OUR HOMEWORLD AND RID OF THIS REPUGNANT HUMAN SHELL.

THEN BY ALL MEANS, PROCEED, M'KOI. REUNIFICATION AWAITS.

M'KOI'S HANDS FLOW OVER THE CONTROL BOARD WITH THE SKILL AND CONFIDENCE BORN FROM A DECADE OF PRACTICE AND ANTICIPATION OF THIS VERY MOMENT.

DEEP WITHIN THE INSTALLATION, ADVANCED COLD FUSION REACTORS POWER UP AS GYROSCOPES ALIGN LASER BATTERIES AT THE CENTER OF THE ORB.

AS THE FINAL COUNTDOWN COMMENCES, KLAXONS SOUND WITHIN THE WALLS OF THE FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECT.

PROTECTIVE SHIELDS OPEN TO REVEAL IMMENSE MAGNETIC AMP FIELD COILS SPECIALLY DESIGNED TO BOOST THE ORB'S ENERGY BEAM ONCE ITS OUTER SHELL IS BREACHED.

FIRING SYSTEMS HAVE BEEN INITIATED. SAFETY LOCKS ARE DISENGAGED.

HELSPONT!

PIKE?! WHERE IS...

BEWARE! THREE GIFTED ONES ARE BATTLING B'LIAL AND HIS YOUNGBLOOD FLUNKIES AT THIS VERY MOMENT.

BUT THE GRIFTER AND ZEALOT WERE NOWHERE IN SIGHT.

THEY MAY ALREADY BE HERE.

Bah! IT'S OF NO CONSEQUENCE NOW. THERE IS NOTHING THEY CAN DO TO STOP US, ONCE THE LASERS ARE ACTIVATED...

...IT WILL ALL BE OVER.

FAMOUS LAST WORDS, DAEMONITE!

FINAL COUNTDOWN HAS BEEN INITIATED.

LOOKS LIKE YOUR BARK'S A LOT WORSE THAN YOUR BITE, GRIFTER. BESIDES, WHO CAN TAKE THE WORDS OF A DEAD MAN SERIOUSLY?

THE GRIFTER'S BLOOD IS MINE IN A DEATH DUEL, PIKE! FOR THE VENGEANCE AND HONOR OF THE SISTERHOOD!

STOP YOUR BICKERING AND DESTROY THEM!

THIS IS HOW YOU DO YOUR JOB, HELSPONT?!

LEAVING IMPORTANT MATTERS TO A PAIR OF INCOMPETENT MERCENARIES?

I SHALL DEAL WITH THESE MEDDLESOME FOOLS, *MYSELF*. IN THE *OLD* WAYS AND WITH MY *OWN* HANDS!

YOU'LL HAVE TO DEAL WITH ME FIRST, DAEMONITE MONSTER!

THEN COME TO ME, KHERUB HALF-BREED! I SHALL RELISH RIPPING THE VERY LIFE FROM YOUR BODY!

DAEMONITE, THE ONLY THING YOU'LL DO IS DIE!

THE SAME WAY MY FAMILY DID WHEN YOU BUTCHERS TOOK THEM FROM ME!

CORE ACCESS DUCT 17.

LIGHTS FLICKER IN THE RECENTLY EXCAVATED TUNNEL WHERE THE EX-CON CALLED **ATTICA** TAPS INTO A SERVO-MAINTENANCE COMPUTER TERMINAL.

HE WATCHES WITH INTEREST AS THE FIGHT, THREE FLOORS ABOVE, HEATS UP.

NOW THAT'S MORE LIKE IT.

THERE MAY ACTUALLY BE SOMEONE HERE WORTH FIGHTING--

DO NOT WASTE TIME, ATTICA. WE MUST REACH THE CORE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

YESSS. **HARM** ISSS RIGHT. MASSSTER GNOME SSSHALL BE HERE SSSOON.

ATTICA HAS SUCCESSFULLY ACCESSED THE INSTALLATION'S DATA BANKS, MASTER.

HE HAS ALSO DEACTIVATED THE FUSION REACTORS SO THAT WE MAY ENTER THE ORB CONTAINMENT CHAMBER.

GREETINGS, MY TRIAD. WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS, YES?

JUST HOLD ON TO YOUR LAVA, SLAG.

UNLESS YOU WANT TO BE VAPORIZED IN THE REACTOR CHAMBER, YOU BETTER COOL OFF TILL I CAN BYPASS THE CONTROL CENTER AND SHUT OFF THE MAIN REACTORS.

WELL DONE, MY TRIAD.

MY ULTIMATE MOMENT OF TRIUMPH APPROACHES!

ONCE I HAVE THE ORB IN MY HANDS, ALL OF YOU SHALL REAP THE REWARDS YOU SO RICHLY DESERVE!

HIS NAME IS MAUL.

ALTHOUGH HE POSSESSES THE POWER TO EXPONENTIALLY INCREASE HIS MASS, EACH INCREASE IS ACCOMPANIED BY A PROPORTIONAL DECREASE IN PHYSICAL AS WELL AS MENTAL RESTRAINT.

RAAWWRR

IN SHORT, HE BECOMES UNCONTROLLABLE!

OH MY GOD! SPARTAN, ARE YOU--

FORGET... ABOUT ME! WE'VE... GOT TO STOP... MAUL...

...IF HE KEEPS... EXPANDING, HE'LL BRING...THE ENTIRE BUILDING DOWN... ON TOP OF US. YOU'VE...GOT TO STOP HIM...BEFORE IT'S...TOO LATE...

ME?! STOP HIM? HOW AM I SUPPOSED--

LISTEN TO ME! THE GRIFTER SAID...YOU USED ...SOME SORT OF PSIONIC...POWER... BACK AT THE CLUB--

--GET HIM... UNDER CONTROL! IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE!

LEFT WITH NO OTHER CHOICE, VOODOO CONCENTRATES. SHE REACHES OUT TO MAUL THE SAME WAY SHE DOES TO THE MEN WHO WATCH HER ON STAGE.

AT FIRST, SHE CANNOT MAKE CONTACT. MAUL'S CHAOTIC MIND RAGES LIKE A HURRICANE. BUT SUDDENLY VOODOO BREAKS THROUGH TO THE EYE OF THE STORM.

ONCE INSIDE, VOODOO SIMPLY SWITCHES THE POWER OFF.

WHA...WHAT HAPPENED?! WHERE AM I?

IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW, MAUL. JUST TAKE IT EASY, BIG GUY.

IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE WOMAN HAS SAVED US. PERHAPS THERE IS MORE GOING ON HERE THAN MEETS THE EYE.

IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE. WHY'D THE BIG GUY TAKE THAT FIRST SHOT--*HEY?!*

YOU MAY HAVE SAVED YOUR *FRIEND'S* LIFE, HALF-BREED WITCH.

BUT NOW *YOU* SHALL PAY THE PRICE.

SIR! I CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT.

THEY MAY BE TERRORISTS BUT WE HAVE THEM IN CUSTODY NOW.

LET US HANDLE IT.

WHAT?! YOU DARE LAY YOUR HANDS UPON ME?!

BLAM!

I AM IN CHARGE HERE! I GIVE THE ORDERS!

YOU ARE MERELY HERE TO PROTECT AND SERVE ME--AND IF NECESSARY, *DIE* FOR ME!

WATCH OUT!

UH...GUYS?

DOES THIS MEAN WE HAVE TO DUST THE V.P.?

THAT'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO TELL YOU. THIS IS *NOT* THE VICE-PRESIDENT.

JUST GIVE US A CHANCE AND WE'LL PROVE IT!

EERGH!

ALL RIGHT. I'M LISTENING, LADY.

YOU'VE GOT FIVE SECONDS TO SHOW ME YOU'RE NOT BEHIND THIS.

WITH THE DAEMONITE RENDERED IMMOBILE BY A MIND-LOCK, VOODOO BEGINS THE PROCESS OF BREAKING THROUGH THE PSYCHIC BARRIERS WEAVED BY THE DAEMONITE TO IMPRISON THE VICE-PRESIDENT.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

THE DIFFICULT TASK IS NOT WITHOUT PAIN AS THE PARASITIC DAEMONITE, B'LIAL, IS EXORCISED FROM ITS HUMAN HOST.

THE PAIN...

...IT...IS...

...UNBEARABLE!

THERE! THAT'S YOUR REAL ENEMY!

THE PHYSICAL AND PSYCHIC TRAUMA OF THE EXORCISM PROVES TO BE TOO MUCH FOR B'LIAL.

WITHOUT THE ENERGY PROVIDED BY A HOST BODY, THE DAEMONITE COLLAPSES ONTO THE GROUND, UNABLE TO SUPPORT ITS OWN WEIGHT.

I'M...SO-;KAFF;SORRY...JUST...COULDN'T;COUGH;STOP IT...

IT'S OKAY, SIR. IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT. EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE FINE. JUST REST.

THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO REST FOR THE WICKED...

HEY, ZIPPO-HEAD!

BACK AWAY FROM THE CONTROL CONSOLE! THE CABAL AND PROJECT REUNIFICATION ARE FINISHED.

THAT VOICE! IT CAN'T BE!

UNN

MARLOWE! BUT I SAW YOU DIE THIRTY YEARS AGO!

NO MATTER. I SHALL SIMPLY KILL YOU AGAIN.

UNNN

WHAT'S HE BABBLING--

VOID! SHIELDS UP!

TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE, KHERUBIM!

SHZZRAAK

UUNNGH!

SHIELDS CAN'T HOLD-- YEARRGHH!

YOUR COMRADES HAVE FALLEN! WHERE IS YOUR BRAVADO NOW, GRIFTER?

THAT'S FUNNY. THAT WAS THE *LAST* THING YOUR *SISTER CODA* SAID BACK IN D.C. BEFORE I--

BACK AWAY, *BROTHER GRIFTER!* THE CODA IS MINE. YOU'RE TOO CLOSE TO HER--

SLASH!

$#☆@! GET OUTTA MY WAY, ZEALOT. I CAN'T SEE--

AARRGH!

YOU DO NICE WORK, KID. PITY THEY FOUND YOU FIRST. COULD'VE USED SOMEONE WITH YOUR TALENTS.

THURK!

YEEARRGH!

YOU SHALL PAY DEARLY FOR YOUR ACTIONS, CODA!

DON'T THINK SHE'S GOING TO BITE, CODA.

SHE LOOKS LIKE THE TYPE WHO LIKES IT SLOW AND PAINFUL.

LOOK AROUND YOU, SISTER. YOU ARE ALONE.

SURRENDER AND I SHALL HONOR YOU WITH A QUICK AND PAINLESS DEATH.

SHE'LL BE A LONG TIME DYING.

AS SHALL YOU UPON MY SWORD, PIKE!

BUT THIS WOMAN IS CODA. SHE WILL DIE FIRST.

I'M AFRAID I CAN'T ALLOW THAT, MY DEAR.

YOU CODA ASSASSINS ARE FAR TOO VALUABLE TO BE WASTED KILLING EACH OTHER.

AAGHK!

ZEALOT NEVER EVEN SEES THE ATTACK COMING AS HELSPONT'S PSIONIC ATTACK OVERLOADS HER BRAIN SYNAPSES AND BLOTS OUT CONSCIOUSNESS AND REALITY IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE.

AND AS QUICKLY AS THE FIGHT HAD BEGUN, IT IS OVER...

...LEAVING HELSPONT TO RELISH HIS VICTORY.

IT IS DONE! THE LAST OF THEM HAS FALLEN! EVEN A LORD KHERUBIM!

NOW SHALL THE DAEMONITES TAKE THIS MISBEGOTTEN PLANET FROM THE ACCURSED KHERUBIM AND THEIR HALF-BREED SPAWN.

PITY YOU COULD NOT SAVOR THIS MOMENT OF VICTORY, M'KOI, BUT YOU DIED AN HONORABLE--THOUGH PAINFUL--DEATH.

I ALONE HAVE THE HONOR OF BREACHING THE ORB!

CLIK!

WHAT THE HELL?! SOMEONE'S ACTIVATED THE ORB!

HIGH ABOVE EARTH IN THE COLD VASTNESS OF SPACE, A STARGATE TAKES SHAPE AS TIME AND SPACE WARP, ALTERING THE VERY FABRIC OF THE UNIVERSE.

AS IF ON CUE, A FLOTILLA OF DAEMONITE STARSHIPS VECTOR IN ON THE PORTAL CREATED BY THE ORB.

YES! COME, MY BROTHERS!

THE TIME HAS COME TO TAKE THIS WORLD FOR THE GLORY OF DAEMON!

THE TIME HAS COME FOR...

RETURN

Be here for

THE MOST INCREDIBLE COMEBACK OF ALL TIME!!

ZONE